

SEP 28 1998

September 26, 1998

DOE-Idaho
850 Energy Drive
Idaho Falls, ID 83401
ATTN: John Medema, AMWTP EIS Document Manager
By FAX: 208/526-0160

AMWTP OFFICE

#45
49

Subject: Comments on Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project Draft
Environmental Impact Statement

As representatives of groups whose members live in the shadows of the nuclear weapons complex, we submit the following comments on the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project draft EIS.

The cornerstone of the National Environmental Policy Act is the opportunity it gives the public to comment on proposed federal actions *and* the obligation it places on federal agencies to respond meaningfully to those comments. Normally, the public comments on a draft environmental impact statement, and the agency incorporates those comments in a final EIS. If a draft EIS lacks the most fundamental information about a proposed action, the federal agency has effectively blocked the public's right to comment.

The draft EIS of the mixed waste plant proposed for construction at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory is so cursory that the Department of Energy should not go forward with a final EIS. Instead, the DOE should issue a new draft EIS.

Fundamental flaws in the draft EIS include:

The draft EIS contains almost no information on the characteristics of the waste proposed for treatment at the plant. What information is included is contradictory.

The draft EIS does not describe the proposed treatment technologies with necessary specificity. For instance, the relative risks and benefits of the proposed technologies are not fully detailed nor are they compared to those of other technologies; treatment for corrosive and reactive waste is barely mentioned.

The draft EIS does not adequately examine the goal of treatment, the final waste form, or how the waste form and treatment goals will be assured.